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Royal Intrigues:

OR,

SECRET MEMOIRS OF

FOUR PRINCESSES:

INVOLVING

NUMEROUS INTERESTING AND CURIOUS ANECDOTES CONNECTED WITH THE PRINCIPAL COURTS OF EUROPE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

BY

J. P. HURSTONE, Esq.

AUTHOR OF "THE NOBLE CORNUTOES," &c. &c. &c.

Fugite amor amanti; amore amico
O che fiero nemico,
Non credete à sembianti:
Che par soave, è pûngente, è crudo,
E men è disarmato alor ch'è nudo.

GUARINI.

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ROYAL INTRIGUES.

Secret History of
SOPHIA DOROTHEA,
Of HANOVER.

Sophia Dorothea of Zelle, one of the most beautiful and amiable Princesses of her time, was sacrificed to politics in being compelled to marry her cousin George Elector of Hanover. It is certain that she was aware of the match being as disagreeable to him as it was to her, since it was notorious

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that he had long felt the most tender passion for a certain Lady of the name of Wick. After the celebration of the nuptials, which took place at Zelle November 21, 1682, the young couple departed for Hanover, where the grandest entertainments were prepared for their reception.

The Court of Hanover was then in it's greatest glory: the persons who composed it exhibited an union of the grandest nature, and the beautiful Countess of Platen, the favorite of the Elector, was the queen of the brilliant fêtes which each day boasted

of. Among the young nobleman who frequented this Court, Count Koenigsmark was one of the most distinguished, and certainly was the greatest favorite of the ladies. To the most excellent mental qualities he added a manly beauty of person, which made an immediate impression upon every beholder; and the high idea that was entertained of his worth, determined the general homage of which he was the object. He passed his early days at the Court of Zelle, where he had been brought up with the Princess Sophia, between whose disposition and his own a sweet sympathy existed,

the knot whereof was more closely drawn by a friendship of a very tender kind. The Count followed the Princess to Hanover with the design of composing a part of her establishment. His chiefest ambition, as soon as he had effected his purpose, was to be continually near the person of a Princess whom he so highly esteemed. He had the satisfaction to find his wishes accomplished, but alas! that which he regarded as the epoch of his felicity, became the bane of it. He perceived too late that the sentiments wherewith the lovely Sophia had inspired him, were more delicate than those of mere

friendship; that they were those of the most ardent passion he discovered on interrogating his heart, which although it could point out to him the destructive rock, did not afford fortitude necessary to avoid it. Prince Charles, brother to the Elector, a young man full of ardour and vivacity, conceived a strong liking for Koenigsmark, and not only chose him out as his constant companion, but as his most intimate friend and confidant.

This Prince was much attached to his sister in-law, and the frequent visits he made her enabled Koenigsmark,

who accompanied him, daily to converse with the Princess, and to bring to her recollection events of their infancy, which awakened in her mind sensations of a kind by no means unfavorable to her lover. By giving way to the effects of those interviews, and and continually seeking occasion to renew his visits, Koenigsmark plunged more deeply into his heart the shaft which had wounded him, and which he had not courage to pluck forth. He would fain have combatted the force of his inclinations, and sought a remedy or the devouring evil that consumed him, but the season for reformation

was gone by; he found it impossible to burst the bonds that encompassed his heart, and all that he could therefore do was to hide from the world the love that was his torment and his delight.

The Princess was unhappy. Her spouse loved her not. Mrs. Wick still preserved her empire over the heart of her lover, and the birth of the young Prince,* whom Sophia presented her lord with, did not in any respect tend (as she flattered herself it would) to increase his affection for her. The pain which she experienced on this

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* October 30, 1683.

account was so great that she could not long conceal it, and frequently without reserve she complained to Mrs. Wick, and the Countess of Platen her sister. Such communications, however, only served to excite animosity in those women, and still more to alienate the heart of the Prince, over whom they obtained so absoluie a dominion, that for the space of several months he did not address a word to Sophia without accompanying it with a tone of harshness, or the most marked and offensive indifference.

After reflecting for some time upon

the line of conduct she should pursue, Sophia at length resolved upon one from which she expected to derive as much success as she could desire. Having one day learned that the Prince was alone in his apartment, she proceeded thither. As soon as he perceived her approach he endeavoured to avoid her, but Sophia ran towards him, exclaiming, " Ah! why will you thus fly from me? should not my place ever be beside my husband? for pity's sake deign to listen to the question I am about to put to you: by what crime have I rendered myself culpable in your eyes, and my presence hateful to you?

In the name of Heaven I implore that you will condescend to state your motive for refusing me your love, and how I may regain the only thing that can ease my afflicted mind?"

"By calming your passion, Madam," coldly replied the Prince, "and regaining that self-possession which you are at this moment in want of." As he spoke thus he withdrew, leaving the unhappy Sophia a prey to grief, and to the effects of her dissappointment at being received in such a manner by a husband, whom she had vainly hoped her anxiety and affection

might move. Trembling and scarcely able to support herself, she returned to her chamber, where she found Miss Molk, her bosom friend, and Count Koenigsmark. Both of them observing the trouble and agitation that reigned in her visage, earnestly importuned her to reveal the cause, which at length she did, by relating all that had passed between herself and the Prince. "He is not deserving of one of those tears he is so cruel as to make flow," said Koenigsmark. "Moderate your anger," replied the Princess, "remember that it is my husband of whom you speak. I am far from complaining of

him, I only lament *my destiny*, I know that he has not the best affection for me, but I should not forget that he is my lord. I am willing to do justice to the kind attachment you evince towards me, but the manner of proving it and the only one that I dare exact of you and my dear Molk is, to bury in profound silence the cause which I have assigned to you as being that of my woes. I should for ever renounce the pleasure of beholding you, if I could not depend upon the discretion which I demand of you."

The Count and Miss Molk promised

to preserve silence, in compliance with the wish she had just expressed. Scarcely had they done speaking before Prince Charles was announced. His presence caused an immediate change in the subject of conversation, but still Koenigsmark was not sufficiently master of his feelings to prevent them from being noticed by the Prince, who as soon as they quitted the apartment of Sophia to pass to a neighbouring gallery, stopped before Koenigsmark, saying, "Frankly relate to me, my dear Count, what has happened to you, for you cannot deny that which is evidently depicted in your countenance; either you

have experienced, or are on the point of suffering, something unpleasant. You would fain keep the secret, but you must absolutely let me know what it is that troubles and agitates you. Perhaps you have some amour which goes wrong?"

"How can you form such a supposition, Prince?" said Koenigsmark, endeavouring to assume a less embarrassed air. "Why faith," replied the Prince, "the supposition is so natural a one that I cannot conceive how it should astonish you. What other reason can there be for your present embarrass-

ment, than that which I suspect and which with reason should trouble you. Let me know the name of the beauty by whose charms you are stricken, and in return for your confidence, it is possible that I may render you more essential services than you are aware of." The Count was about to return an answer, when the approach of several persons belonging to the Court terminated his embarrassment and the importunities of the Prince. As soon as he reached his own apartments he gave free scope to his imagination, and a crowd of ideas rushed upon it, which only served to augment his inquietude

in proportion as he endeavoured to combat them.

The Princess in a short time subsequent to her rencontre with the Elector fell dangerously ill, and the physicians having declared that her malady was of a very serious nature, Prince George, in compliance with custom's laws, was assiduous in his attentions to her until the disorder took a favorable turn. When every dangerous symptom had disappeared, and the Princess became convalescent, she was removed to a charming villa of the Elector, in order to the perfect re-establishment

of her health. Prince Charles and Koenigsmark accompanied her thither, as did the Elector himself, and the new residence soon became the seat of pleasure and entertainment of every description. Whilst matters were in this state the Countess of Platen, one of the most interesting and beautiful women of the Court, resolved to captivate the heart of Koenigsmark, and the means which she employed to succeed in her project quickly produced the effects she desired. The gloom that pervaded the Count's features did not escape her quick observation. Anxious to seize every occasion for

dispelling his melancholy, she accompanied him through the most retired walks of the estate, preached philosophy to him, and insensibly got so much the better of his stoical indifference, that she plainly perceived she might make what use she pleased of her victory. A ball which she gave enabled her to accomplish her triumph, and Koenigsmark inflamed as well by dancing as the vapours of wine yielded to the inticements of the Conntess. Midnight had scarely arrived ere in her arms he participated in love's most secret mysteries. As soon as Aurora visited the chamber in which our lovers

had past the happiest moments of their lives, the Countess tenderly pressing the Count to her bosom, said, " Adieu my dearest Koenigsmark, do not forget a friend upon whom you may depend, and to whom your happiness will ever be dearer than her own."

Shortly after this affair Prince Charles joined the army which the Emperor was leading against the Turks, and Koenigsmark was his companion in the expedition. The adieux which passed between the Count and the Princess were moving, but those of the Countess were of the most tender

kind. They both conjured him not to expose his life too much to those dangers into which his ardour might urge him to enter, and while Sophia addressed to him the most strenuous assurances of her everlasting friendship, the Countess exhausted language in intreating him to preserve inviolate that love which he had pledged to her. The Princess did not permit him to depart until he had taken leave of her in a public audience. The Countess, on the contrary, would have no other witness of their parting scene than love, and it was in the chamber where she had given him the

first real proofs of her affection that she testified the anguish she felt at being separated from him.

Scarcely had Koenigsmark and Charles departed ere the Court returned to Hanover. It was not without the most lively sensations of grief that the Princess revisited this town, where she found herself almost deserted, having no other society than that of Miss Molk. Her thoughts were continually with Koenigsmark, and she established a correspondence with him. She was not however particular in this respect, for many ladies of the

court did the same; and as for the Countess Platen, there was not a courier who departed for the army that she did not burthen with tender and passionate billets for her lover, tending to strengthen the ties that existed between herself and him.

No great space of time had elapsed from the departure of our soldiers before news reached Hanover of Prince Charles having been killed in an action with the Turks, and Koenigsmark having fallen by his side covered with wounds. The Princess learned the melancholy tidings with the most

heartfelt grief, but the Countess set no bounds to her lamentations upon the mournful occasion. The death of Prince Charles was confirmed, but Koenigsmark, to the astonishment of every body, returned to Hanover, where he was received by Sophia with such affection and friendship, as proved to him the pleasure she experienced in beholding him once more. She was now at drawn daggers with the Elector. In the course of an altercation which she had with him relative to his connection with Mrs. Wick, he became so enraged that he seized the Princess by the neck, and she would infallibly

have been the victim of his brutal rage had not her screams brought to her succour the ladies in waiting, who snatched her from his rude hands. The Prince brutally pushed her from him as he let go his hold, and in the height of his wrath swore that he would not be reconciled to her during life, at the same time rushing like a madman from the apartment. Thus were matters situated when Koenigsmark arrived, and was received by the Princess in the flattering manner we have just described. " You have returned very opportunely, my dear Count," said she, " to console me for

the misfortune under which I labour. With so much the more confidence do I speak to you of him who is the cause of my affliction, since I know that you will be sensible of it, and by consolatory efforts soften the tortures which rend my heart.

From this time a day scarcely passed in which Koenigsmark and Sophia did not meet and converse upon the subject of her unhappiness. This intimacy of theirs naturally gave rise to the scandalous babbling of all the ladies of the Court, who spoke of it

without any reserve; and even the Countess could not refrain from communicating to her lover, the suspicions which his continual intercourse with the Princess raised in her mind. "I warn you, my dear Count," said she one day to him, "to take care; you know the spouse of the Princess, and are well aware what pleasure it would give him publicly to expose her. She is no doubt deserving of pity, but—

"The advice which you have the goodness to give me, Madam," said Koenigsmark, interrupting her, "would

merit my utmost gratitude and attention had I any occasion to profit by it."
"So you say at least," replied the Countess, shaking her head and smiling, "your delicacy induces you to speak thus, but once more, let prudence regulate your conduct, and you will have no cause for future sorrow."
Subsequently to this conversation Koenigsmark was rather more circumspect, but to avert the mischief was now too late, both his lot and that of the Princess were already ordained. To add to his misfortune he had the imprudence to declare his sentiments respect-

ing Sophia to the Countess. This libertine women carried her hatred as far as her love and the other passions to whose influence she was subject, and from the moment of the Count's unguarded avowal, his destruction was resolved upon. Her sister, Mrs. Wick, burned with impatience to be revenged upon the Princess, and now she found in the Countess an instrument for working the ruin of her destined victim.

The Prince each day testified fresh dislike towards the unfortunate Sophia, and it seemed impossible she should

escape the snares laid for her destruction. Sophia trusted that she should receive some consolation from her father, and she accordingly repaired to Zelle, but she found him so much prepossessed against her, that she was compelled to return to Hanover with, if possible, greater cause for chagrin than when she had quitted it. Tears and intreaties were useless, and Sophia experienced rebuffs on every side, which deprived her of the hope of escaping insults from a Court where she was become an object of ridicule, and, as it were, an isolated being.

Miss Molk and Koenigsmark alone remained faithful, and testified towards her that compassion which her sad and pitiable situation demanded. Sophia believed she could not recompense them otherwise than by confiding herself entirely to them, a proceeding which strengthened the ties of tender attachment, whereof both one and the other gave her fresh assurances.

" Ah! I fear much," said she to them on a certain occasion, " that this constancy on your part costs you very dearly, and that I shall not long be per-

mitted to receive the consolations which your society affords me." "Death alone, Madam," replied her two friends, "can separate us from you, and the hardships which we would undergo, sooner than part with you, should show at once our fortitude and our affection."—"Ah! let us fly, my dear Molk, let us fly from a place which, the numerous indignities I have received in it, render insupportable to me. In vain I have sought under the roof of a father that compassion which the misfortunes I underwent gave me a right to expect. Prejudice in him

has stifled the voice of nature, and it is only in the bosom of friendship I can receive the least marks of concern for my miserable situation. My resolution is taken, I am resolved to fly to France and bury myself for ever in the obscurity of a cloister."

It was in vain that Miss Molk and Koenigsmark tried to dissuade the Princess from this project. Nothing was capable of altering her determination, and at length she became so importunate for it's being effected, that they consented to accompany her in

her flight, and to think only of expediting the happy moment in which it should be undertaken. In order to adjust the plan and leisurely concert the means necessary to be used for it's perfection, it was decided that the Count should repair at twelve o'clock every night to the apartments of the Princess, and that Miss Molk should keep watch in order to prevent their being surprised together. Notwithstanding these precautions the Count could not elude the vigilance of those *Argi* who were commissioned to observe Sophia's motions. The Elector was informed of the noc-

turnal visits of the Count, and he resolved to sacrifice him to his vengeance.

Koenigsmark having through an anonymous communication learned the fate that awaited him, had the good fortune to avoid it by instantly departing for Poland, under pretence of visiting his sister who dwelt there. Whilst in Warsaw he one day chanced to fall into company with several young men, who having drunk to excess after dinner, proposed, that to give zest to their wine, each person present should relate his gallant adventures. Koenigs-

mark, whose head, like those of the rest, was disordered, began his recital with the affair between him and the Countess Platen, and encouraged by the plaudits of his jovial companions, carried his indiscretion so far as to speak of the Princess, ridicule the Elector, and even daclare that Sophia was ready to fly with him, that he had formed the plan of her flight, and would accompany her in it.

Unfortunately there happened to be among his auditors an officer who had formerly been in the Hanoverian ser-

vice, but who, in consequence of some disgrace to which he subjected himself, had retired to Warsaw. The little hope this man entertained of making a fortune in Poland, caused him to seize upon a mode thus offered to him of regaining the favour of the Court, and making a discovery of what had fallen from Koenigsmark, to the Elector. The latter he immediately wrote to, communicating every syllable that had been uttered by the imprudent young nobleman. The Count, upon his return to Hanover, made it his first business to visit Miss Molk, from whom he learn-

ed that every thing was in readiness for the flight of the Princess, and that he had only to repair to her apartments at midnight to receive his final instructions.

An idea may easily be formed of the excellent reception Sophia gave him, and their conversation must indeed have been very interesting, as he did not quit her chamber before day-light appeared. He left her, never, alas! to see her more! Scarcely had he stepped into the adjoining gallery, ere he was assailed by four men, who had

previously been posted there. He drew his sword, defended himself with the utmost courage, and mortally wounded one of the assassins. Unluckily however the blade of his sword snapped, and he fell covered with wounds. "Tell your employer," said he in a dying voice, "Tell him that the blood he has spilt should satisfy his vengeance, the unfortunate Sophia is innocent." So saying he uttered a groan and expired.

The Elector, who at the solicitation of the vindictive Countess Platen had

acted a part, masked, in this murderous scene,* advanced and taking off his visor ordered the body of the ill-fated Koenigsmark to be cast into a privy, which on the following day he caused to be blocked up. He then proceeded to join the Countess, who impatiently awaited to hear the fate of her indiscreet lover. "It is done without doubt!" cried she, running to meet the Elector, who answered by an inclination of the head, whereupon she

* Secret History of the Electoress of Hanover, consort to George I. King of Great Britain, published at Paris in the year 1732.

cast herself into his arms, and embraced him with such rapture as exhibited the excess of her thirst for revenge, and the joy she felt at its being satisfied. As soon as the Princess was up Miss Molk informed her, with the utmost terror in her countenance, that Koenigsmark had not returned home, that his domestics were seeking for him in every direction, that traces of blood had been seen in the gallery, and finally, that seals had been put upon all the papers of the Count. "Gracious God!" exclaimed Sophia, "they have assassinated him, and I am lost."

In examining the papers of the Count, several letters were found which he had had the imprudence to preserve, and in consequence of their contents the Princess and Miss Molk were put under immediate arrest. The Duke of Zelle was soon informed of what had occurred. At the news of this calamity the Duchess threw herself upon her knees before her spouse, and begged that he would interest himself in behalf of his daughter Sophia. " I never remember, Madam," coldly replied the Duke, " to have had a daughter who bore that name." In

consequence of this indifference on the part of her flinty-hearted father, the much-injured Sophia was abandoned to the will of her enemies.

A Captain of the Elector's guards entered her apartment, and, as he had been directed, announced to her the tragical end of Count Koenigsmark. Sophia, whom mental anguish had nearly deprived of the use of her faculties, raised her eyes towards Heaven, and joined her hands as if in prayer. The Captain informed her that he was ordered to conduct her to the castle of

Ahlen. "Well, Sir," replied the Princess, "lose no time in obeying your orders; take me from this theatre of injustice and barbarity. Whatever be the prison to which you will lead me, it will appear a million times less loathsome to me than this palace whose walls reek with the blood which the assassins have caused to flow. Take me quickly from this horrible den, where guilt and hell-born furies dwell." As she spoke thus she advanced precipitately towards the carriage, which waited for her in the inner court of the palace.

Arrived at Ahlen the Governor conducted her to the chamber appropriated to her use, informing her that she was there to spend the residue of her days. The domestics who attended her were all strangers, whom she could not inspire with the least compassion for her sufferings. Having been questioned some time after her detention, she answered with as much laconism as *sang froid*, when told that there was still a chance of her being reconciled to the Prince. " Tell him that he must never flatter himself, he will find favour in my eyes; for if the accusa-

tion against me be true, *I* am unworthy of the *Prince*; and if I am innocent, the *Prince* is unworthy of *me*.

This reply being reported to the Prince, he flew into a violent rage, which with difficulty was calmed. The affair was afterwards carried to the Consistory of Hanover and Zelle, which pronounced a divorce allowing the Prince only to marry again.* In the course of a few years the Princess obtained a greater degree of liberty.

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* 28th December 1694.

She was permitted occasionally to go forth with an escort, and to receive letters. By means of this last privilege she learned that Miss Molk had eluded the watchfulness of her jailers at Newburgh and escaped to Vienna, at which news Sophia appeared extremely rejoiced. Her occupations during her confinement chiefly consisted in reading, writing and drawing.

The Duke and Duchess of Zelle died before the Princess, and the Elector became King of England under the name of George I. Sophia died 22d

June, 1727. Her death occasioned so inconsiderable an emotion at Court, that the King did not so much as put on mourning in consequence.

Such is the history of this Princess, upon whose fate a veil has been drawn which time has not hitherto removed, and which servile respect will probably for ever suffer to hide it.

The first duty of the historian is to exhibit the crime wherever he meets with guilty beings. Woe to those who disfigure the language of truth.

Secret History of

MARIA of PORTUGAL.

The Portuguese groaned under the Spanish dominion from the time of Philip II. to that of Philip IV. Having at length revolted in consequence of the tyranny which this Prince exercised over them, they placed Don Juan, Duke of Braganza,* upon the

* Every thing relating to this event is inserted in the Historical Records printed at Weimar in 1800, under the following title, "Elevation of the House of Braganza to the throne of Portugal."

throne. Louisa Medina Sidonia, his consort, and daughter to a Spanish Duke of that name, acted with so much address upon this occasion, that she triumphed over the irresolution of Don Juan, and placed upon his head the crown which he hesitated to accept of.

" Would it not be better," she has frequently said to him, " to be King of Portugal for a quarter of an hour, than Duke of Braganza for a hundred years?" " Yes, for most certainly it is more glorious to die a king than a

slave.* Roused by these pressing solicitations, the Duke decided upon taking up arms, and was declared King of Portugal. His manner of governing rendered him deserving of the esteem and gratitude of his subjects, and the happiness which they enjoyed during his reign, proved more clearly to them how worthy he was of occupying the throne upon which they had placed

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* *Ericeira historia di Portugal restaurada. Lisbon,* 1751. Vol. I. p. 99.

Birago Historia della revolutioni di Portugallo, page 156.

Clef de l'histoire generale de Portugal. Paris 1735. Vol. II. 156.

him. His eldest son Theodosius, a prince who gave infinite promise of future excellence, having died in the flower of his youth,* his brother Don Alphonso became heir to the crown.†

Of a constitution naturally delicate, this Prince suffered from his most tender years under numerous maladies, which materially affected his nervous system. Every body, in consequence of the weakness of organs, would without hesitation have affirmed that he

* Born 1636. Acknowledged as hereditary Prince in 1641. Died 1653.

† Born in 1643.

was impotent were he not the Sovereign, and that the respect which his subjects had for his person prevented them from touching upon those infirmities to which he was subject. So feeble was he at times, that in walking one day through the palace, his legs failed him, and he fell into a fire in one of the apartments, which disfigured him in a shocking manner. In short this Prince, neither in a moral or physical point of view, offered any thing capable of exciting interest, and the crown which he bore was the only ornament he had to boast of.

These imperfections in Alphonso formed the most striking contrast to the brilliant qualities of his younger brother Don Pedro, who in addition to the first-rate personal beauties, had obtained universal and deserved applause on account of his mental qualifications. The King Don Juan being dead, Alphonso was by the public voice declared his successor; as, however, he was still under age, the Queen his mother took the reins of government in quality of Regent: Don Francesco de Baro was named the principal tutor of the young monarch, and Count

Odemira President of the Council. The first finding it impossible to make any thing of his young *eleve*, retired and left him to the controul of those passions to which he now set no bounds.

The son of a merchant, Antonio Conti, surnamed Vintimiglie,* so well succeeded in gaining the good graces of Alphonso, that that Prince saw in him only a companion necessary to his pleasures, and from whom it was

* This name he derived from the native city of his father, which was Genoa.

impossible for him to separate himself. There was no excess which in conjunction with this young man he did not commit. His greatest amusement consisted in wrestling with young Moors, blackguards and stable-boys, and committing a thousand other acts, of which the high-minded Portuguese highly disapproved. What more especially pleased the King in Antonio was the dexterity with which the latter made use of arms, from him he took lessons in fencing; and more than once he was known to draw his sword upon individuals whom he provoked to combat.

In this manner he attained the age of sixteen, confided to the care of Count Portelero, who was placed over him in quality of tutor, but had he had a hundred instructors his disposition would have remained unaltered.

His misconduct often put his life in imminent danger; several times was he urged to change his course, but in vain; notwithstanding the inconveniences he so frequently experienced, he continued his nocturnal excursions. The arguments used to dissuade him from his evil pursuits only tended to render him

still more perverse, insomuch that no sober citizen dared to appear in the streets after night-fall, through fear of being exposed to some ill treatment at the hands of his sovereign. Alphonso loaded with presents and honors his libertine companions Antonio and his brother John; while meritorious Portuguese groaned in obscurity and poverty. The Prince regardless of the duty he owed to the Queen, carried his disrespect to such a pitch that he obliged her to quit the Court, and resign to him the reins of Government.*

* In 1665.

In fine, by reason of the misfortunes brought upon her by her son this Princess died shortly after her resignation, regretted by the whole nation.* Alphonso, after the death of his mother, behaved with even less moderation than before, and carried his folly so far as to express a desire to marry, notwithstanding his numerous infirmities. Maria Elizabeth, daughter to Charles

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* She died 28th February 1666, at the age of 56. This part of our History is derived from the following sources: "*Les Rois de Portugal,*" par Pere d'Orleans 1788. "*La vie de Marie de Savoye, Reine de Portugal,*" Paris 1697, and from the works of Portuguese historians.

of Savoy, Duke of Nenwurs, was the victim upon whom he cast his eyes, and who was accordingly brought to Portugal to unite her destiny with that of a Prince equally deformed in person and disposition.

This unfortunate Princess, on beholding the Infant Don Pedro, could not help drawing a comparison between him and his brother, and regretting it was not to that charming Prince she was to be married. "Ah!" said she, sighing, "Why was not he the elder!" The Infant on his part, his hand being

just then engaged to one of the sisters of the Queen, seemed to express by his tender and insinuating conduct towards the latter when he first saw her, how much he regretted her not being the younger. These reciprocal regrets and affections were not long in communicating from the heart to the eyes, a tacit language that betrayed a secret which neither Elizabeth nor Don Pedro tried to conceal from each other. The Infant expressed a wish that no haste should be used in concluding his marriage, and this indifference on his part was well understood by the Queen.

A fête given at Court afforded the two lovers an opportunity of mutually explaining that soft sympathy established between their hearts. The Queen profited by the absence of the King, who as usual was engaged in his nocturnal frolics in company with his abandoned associates, to address the Infant whom she found in a remote apartment, his eyes fixed upon the ground, and apparently so absorb'd in reflection, that he was not conscious of Elizabeth's being in the place whither he had retired freely to indulge his thoughts. " It seems," Don Pe-

dro," said she, " that what now occupies your mind is as melancholy"———

—" As the horrible fate to which I am so unfortunate as to see you condemned, Madam," answered the Infant. " I find it impossible longer to conceal from my Sovereign the pain which I experience on account of the misfortune to which she is doomed."

" What misfortune?" replied the Queen, affecting an air of surprise.

" Oh Madam!" rejoined Don Pedro, " the tender interest with which I participate in every thing that concerns you, has emboldened me more than once to raise the veil which hid from us the tears ready to escape from your eyes. It was thus that I discovered that secret anguish which your discretion vainly endeavoured to conceal from my view. It was by the experience of my own heart's sensations that I formed a just idea of those my august Sovereign must have felt in becoming the partner of a Prince so little worthy of possessing her."

The approach of several ladies belonging to the Queen's suit interrupted this interesting conversation, and both quitted the apartment in which it had commenced, returning to the ball-room. After dancing the Queen called for refreshment, and Don Pedro perceiving a page about to comply with her directions, imposed that task upon himself. The King, who arrived at this moment, observing the assiduous air with which Don Pedro attended her Majesty, turned to his favorite Antonio, and with a smile remarked, " See how assuming the Queens of

Portugal are, not content with the attendance of pages, they oblige the Iafants to be their slaves."

" They exact much more from them," replied Antonio, with a malicious smile. " You doubtless imagine," returned Alphonso, " that I am an Italian, my dear Antonio, and like your compatriots infected with the incurable malady of jealousy. Remember, my dear fellow, that I am King, my spouse Queen, and Don Pedro our brother.'

Having thus spoken he advanced towards the Queen, and with an air of satisfaction and gaiety demanded how she relished the refreshment which Don Pedro had given her. "The Queen has danced a great deal," said Don Pedro. "And the Queen," replied Alphonso, "having over-heated herself, has naturally enough taken refreshment. I see nothing in all this that can displease a husband, or derogate from royal dignity." So saying he retired to another part of the room, but did not leave the company during

the ball, nor even quit the palace for the remainder of the night.

Don Pedro having seated himself beside the Queen, and the dance having recommenced, he profited by the circumstance of the company being engaged in the prevailing amusement to renew the thread of their discourse, which had been broken, as heretofore observed. "I never shall forget, my dear Pedro," said the Queen, "the moment of our first interview, when you were presented to me by the King. I recollect that when I saw you I be-

came so much embarrassed that I am confident you could not have failed to notice my confusion. That which I feel at present is nearly as great. Alphonso is my husband. The Church has given him a right to my person, and has imposed on me an obligation to love him."

"It is true, Madam, that the Church unites the *hands* of those persons conducted to the foot of her altar, in order to legitimate the alliance they form, but is it in her power to unite *hearts*, to bestow *mutual affection?*

No, no, her power does not extend so far. Reasons of state have given rise to your union with Alphonso, and policy is now the only bond by which it is preserved. Surely when you groan beneath this odious chain, it should not appear to you august and worthy of veneration. The vow which you have made to bear it was a rash one, pronounced to your own prejudice, and which it is at your option to retract. The union of two hearts formed for mutual love, is strengthened by the conformity of vows and sentiments. Marriage, when founded

upon the inclination and free will of each party, cannot be characterised a state of slavery. But when two persons are compelled to bestow their hands where their hearts are not placed, can there be a more galling chain than the matrimonial one?"

"Ah! Don Pedro," exclaimed the Queen, "what will be the termination of a connection as unfortunate as it is afflictive?" As she finished these words she cast upon the Infant an expressive regard more eloquent than any thing she could verbally express, and having

risen from her seat she made a sign to one of her attendants to lend her the assistance of her arm in order that she might withdraw. As soon as the Queen had departed Don Pedro also retired, and the ball being soon after over, the company broke up. From what the reader has already learned relative to the Queen and the Infant, no doubt can remain upon his mind as to the degree of intimacy which existed between them.

It will now be proper to bring upon the stage of our history a personage

who plays an essential part in the piece, one of that description of men in whom the ability to conduct an intrigue is a species of innate privilege: we allude to father de Villa, a Jesuit, and the Queen's Confessor. All the reverend Fathers of this Society had at the time in question cast their eyes upon Paraguay, whither they wished to extend their dominion, and their chief consideration at this moment was to insure to themselves by every means the patronage of the Court of Lisbon. The confessor of the Queen was chosen to conduct this grand en-

terprize. He was directed to observe the Queen's disposition towards the order, and even to make her good will in this respect a matter of conscience. Such was the rule of conduct prescribed to the Reverend father de Villa when he was sent to Portugal to fill his high situation.

The queen soon noticed the defects in the organic system of her spouse, and thought herself bound to mention the circumstance in the tribunal of confession, where every thing is disclosed wiihout disguise. This avowal

inclined the Plenipotentiary of the order to believe that the King was not likely to have any issue, a presumption that gained strength by reason of the debilitated state of the monarch, which it was easy for every person to perceive. Our expert director thought therefore that his best plan at this juncture would be to provide against futurity, and for this purpose he did not hesitate long in adding to the august functions of his ministry, the conducting of the Princess's affections which he undertook secretly to manage.

In consequence of this proceeding, he soon became acquainted with the *penchant* of his young penitent towards Don Pedro, and so far from opposing it, with more activity than ever he endeavoured to encourage it, the more so, since he saw that by passing the crown to the Infant there would no longer be any danger of the order of generation being interrupted, as it ran the risk of being by reason of Alphonso's physical defects.

These judicious observations he took especial care to insert in a detailed re-

lation of the state of affairs, which he forwarded to his Parisian bretliren. These good gentlemen immediately applied to Cardinal Bourbon, uncle to the two Princesses, to retard the marriage of the Infant, and to break that of the king.

From this time Father de Villa only thought of the means of bringing the two lovers together, and nothing could more easily be effected. It was under his eyes that this young plant destined to be the prize of love grew, and like a diligent gardener he bestowed upon

it every care, in order to give it additional charms in the sight of him to whom it was intended this lovely flower should one day or other be presented.

The excesses of every kind to which the king abandoned himself, had drawn upon him the contempt of all his subjects, without his being aware of the storms gathering over his head. Count Castelmelhor had spoken much to him on this subject, but he did not regard his advice, neither did he profit by other pieces of counsel which he received in the sequel.

The minister already mentioned, anxious to preserve the credit which he enjoyed in the King's estimation, and to display his services to advantage, at length determined to inform him of a conspiracy formed against his life, at the head of which was Don Pedro his brother. Alphonso learned this information with the utmost trepidation. The Infant, informed of what had been told to his brother, hastened to gain an interview with him, and clear his character from the imputation which had so daringly been thrown upon it. "I know," said he to Alphonso, "what

you think of me, and I am aware of your having been told that I am ring-leader of a conspiracy against your person: here is my sword, my person is also at your disposal."

Alphonso furiously snatched the sword, and endeavoured to give utterance to some words which the excess of his wrath would not allow him to bring forth, " No," continued Don Pedro with the greatest coolness, " I will never draw that sword but in your defence, and all that calumny has loaded me with, instead of displeasing,

gives me pleasure inasmuch as it furnishes me with an opportunity of declaring to you that attachment which I have sworn to you."

Alphonso, much moved by his brother's assertions, regarded him with the greatest attention for a few moments, without proffering a single word. "Where are my accusers?" continued Don Pedro, "let them come forward, and depose against me in the presence of my sovereign. I do not fear them. My sole desire is to know them, in order to enjoy the satisfaction of confounding them."

The King, without making any reply, regarded Castelmelhor slightly, and advancing towards Don Pedro, presented his hand to him, saying, "Let this explanation, my dear brother suffice, we shall continue to be friends, and may nothing alter between us a sentiment of which it affords me pleasure to give and receive proofs." He then quitted the apartment, and Don Pedro returned to his palace.

Father de Villa, the constant instructor of the Queen, hastened to inform her of what had just occurred be-

tween the King and the Infant. "The blood of one or other of the brothers, Madam, might have been spilt, but thank Heaven nothing of the kind has happened; it rests with your Majesty to prevent the repetition of such a scene. Don Pedro is worthy of your love, your heart, your hand. It is now indispensible for both of you to attain that end so necessary for your mutual happiness.

"While the Queen was in the act of assuring him of her resolution to follow his advice, the Infant habited

in the robe of the Confessor, arrived. Various matters being talked over which were necessary to be discussed, Father de Villa accommodatingly retired into an adjoining closet, under pretext of having some letters to write. Our two lovers profited by the opportunity with as much eagerness as a miser contemplates a treasure which he knows he cannot long enjoy, and the return of the father made them regret that he had not more letters to write in order to the prolongation of a *tête a tête* which appeared to them blissful as it was short.

As de Villa and Don Pedro quitted the palace, they were met in the street by a jovial band, at the head of which was the king. The Father having made himself known, Alphonso demanded "What are you doing at this hour in the streets, my dear Reverend? What do you seek for?"

"A King," answered the Priest.

"Whither do you suppose I am now going?" asked the King.

"It appears to me that your Ma-

jesty cannot do better than to visit the Queen, who sighs a solitary being in the palace."

" She has too much spirit not to know how to console herself," said the King.

" Her only consolation is in the innocence of her heart, but the consciousness of her virtues cannot prevent her from feeling. The bread of the Divine Word which my ministry daily offers her——"

" I approve of your zeal," answered Alphonso, " and it would please me to find similar dispositions in all those who are deputed dispensers of spiritual succours."

" Where is the Infant?" demanded Antonio: " Is he composing sermons?"

" No, rather satires," replied the King—for this time, however, he has got off well, but——"

" How!" exclaimed Father de Villa, " does not your Majesty believe him innocent?"

" I have publicly made him the reparation I owed him," replied Alphonso, " with which I hope he is satisfied. God night reverend Father."

The King now proceeded onwards with his company, to the great satisfaction of Don Pedro, who, notwithstanding his jesuitical disguise, was infinitely pleased when the conversation terminated. Having arrived at the corner of a street, they heard two men speaking of the King, and highly condemning the life he led. " Yes," said one, " if the Infant had a little more

energy than he has shewn, Alphonso would not now be on the throne; he and his band of libertines would no longer be dreaded. As it is, we hear nothing daily but accounts of men murdered or beaten in the streets, girls carried off by brutal force, and fathers of families unmercifully assassinated. Shame upon us, to suffer so dissolute a monarch to govern us, and his brother should blush at his being weak enough to witness with apathy such excesses, and not endeavour to arrest their progress."

Struck by what he now heard, Don Pedro returned to his palace, firmly resolving to destroy the opinion which the Portuguese seemed to entertain of him. By force of cunning Father de Villa managed to excite the animosity of the nobility against Castelmelhor, prime minister to the King, and to disseminate this hatred amongst all ranks of Portuguese, by means of emissaries not only against the government, but even the person of Alphonso.

Things came to such a pass that at length it was found necessary to con-

voke the States of the kingdom in order to regulate it's affairs and finances, and this National Assembly proved the political master-piece of our designing Jesuit.

The greatest difficulty was to obtain the consent of the King for the convocation of the State, but at last it was obtained, and after nearly twenty months were consumed in making preparations for this grand event, it finally answered the expectations of those who long eagerly looked for it's taking place.

In the mean time it happened that Alphonso and the Queen had a very serious altercation, in the course of which the former made use of the grossest language, and went so far as to endeavour to drag the Queen, contrary to her inclination, into his own apartment.

It is a well-known fact, that this Prince had caused a double door to be made in the wall behind his bed, by which it was said that during the night he designed introducing one of his favorites, who might fulfil that part of

the conjugal duty which his impotent state disenabled him from performing. The Queen knowing that so corrupt a Prince would not hesitate to commit any act of villany, constantly refused to follow him, and thus exposed herself to his resentment. His act of violence, however, sufficed in determining her to complete what she had long in contemplation. One morning, when the King least expected it, she quitted the palace with her usual attendants,* repaired to the Convent of Hope, inhabited by the religious Cordeliers, and

* 12th December 1667.

having caused the gates to be closed, sent the following letter to the King, by the Grand Master of the Court.

" After having renounced my " family, my country, and my friends, " I came to Portugal to be your spouse; " but you know that in point of fact I " am not so. In conformity to the " dictates of my duty and conscience, " I have resolved to return to France " in a ship of war now lying in this " port. As our marriage never has " been, or can be consummated, for " reasons which I need not assign to

" you, I demand of you in the name " of justice, and as my right, the " dowry which I brought you.

" MARIA."

When the King read this letter, he was transported with rage; he immediately proceeded to the Convent of Hope, and having demanded permission of the Superior to enter, which being refused, he threatened to employ force to effect that which he condescended to ask as a favour. The Superior continuing to deny him admission, the gates were forced. This

had been foreseen, and at the moment in which the sacrilegious act was committed, the Infant arrived surrounded by the deputies of the kingdom. With some difficulty Don Pedro convinced his brother of the impropriety of what he had just done, together with the fatal consequences to which this violence on his part might give rise; the King at length hearkened to these remonstrances, and returned to his palace.

Whilst all this was passing, the people assembled before the gates of the

Convent, each began asking what the matter was, and a general conversation took place, the result of which was far from being favorable to the King, who was blamed by all.

" Well, my good friend," said a tailor to one of his neighbours, " I have long predicted that the Queen would be reduced to this extremity. The rashness of the King, in having forced the gates of the Convent, will draw down upon him an anathema. The Queen wishes to return to France, pretending that the marriage has not

been consummated, and that the poor King is in so pitiful a case——"

"That I cannot believe," said a carpenter, "seeing with what scandalous assiduity the King nightly hunts after ladies of pleasure."

"Pooh!" exclaimed a new speaker, "it is only for fashion's sake that his Majesty haunts houses of ill fame, and to make people believe he is what, in reality, he is not. Conti and the other ill disposed fellows who surround him make him pursue such courses; but

truly it is highly dishonorable to our nation that the beautiful Queen should return to France, as she came hither a maid, it is enough to destroy the reputation of the Portuguese for ever."

"But, my good Sir," replied the joiner, "the nation has nothing to do with that, for all the Portuguese husbands are not like the King. Blame principally attaches to the Prince's physicians; why did they let him marry, if he had not the requisites for a husband?"

"We knew all that before," said the tailor, "but what is worse than all, is, that the Queen has asked for her dowry, and says she must have it either by fair or foul means."

"There is only one way left to remedy this evil," said the joiner, "namely, that the Infant, who is not impotent, become the substitute of his brother. You comprehend what I mean; the matter is easily effected, if the Pope, who has the power of tying and loosing matrimonial knots, will take the trouble to remove the grand difficulty."

"Heaven grant it may be so!" exclaimed all.

"But silence, here comes the Archbishop to visit the Queen, we shall know the result presently."

In effect, it was not long ere they heard what was decided upon; the States unanimously declared Don Pedro governor and regent of the kingdom. The Prince would fain have had time to reflect upon the honor intended him, but the people were so importunate that they prevailed upon him to yield to their solicitations.

The Marquis Cascaes, an old and faithful servant of Alphonso and his father, repaired early in the morning to the palace, where he found the King in a profound sleep, he having been up during the whole of the preceding night engaged in a scene of debauchery.

" How ! my Prince," cried he, kneeling beside the bed, " can you rest thus quietly when the crown is snatched from your head? Alas ! all is over—you are ruined—the States declare the Infant regent, and have decreed your abdication of the throne."

The state of stupor in which the King was, scarcely permitted him to utter a syllable; while the sad news of his downful was confirmed by the other Counsellors and Ministers who thronged to his apartment. Having asked their advice as to the mode of conduct he should adopt, they advised him to have recourse to force. Alphonso therefore jumped out of bed, quickly dressed himself, and with the utmost expedition proceeded to the assembly of the States, where, one of the deputies advancing upon his entrance, respectfully demanded his sword.

"What!" exclaimed Alphonso, casting a furious look upon Don Pedro, "is the want of respect towards my person carried thus far!" then going up to the Infant he partly drew his sword, while Don Pedro with the greatest coolness, and without changing his posture, said, "I have already had an opportunity of assuring the King that I will never draw my sword in his presence but to defend him." "If such is your resolution, traitor," retorted Alphonso, "prove it to be so."

Don Pedro, without losing a particle

of his self possession, rose and informed the King that he had been obliged to submit to the will of the people. Alphonso reading in the faces of all around him a confirmation of what the Infant had said, and being in the habit of leaving all his projects unfinished, handed his sword to the officer, who had required it of him, and permitted himself to be led to an apartment where he was closely guarded.

Scarcely had he entered his place of confinement before he was obliged to sign a declaration, in which he ac-

knowledged that by his voluntary act, he abdicated the throne, and resigned the crown in favour of his brother, reserving to himself a pension of only one thousand cruzados* per annum, with which he declared he should be perfectly satisfied.

Having petitioned the Infant on the second day of his imprisonment to permit one of his old companions to

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* Silver money of Portugal struck during the reign of Alphonso about the year 1665, and so called on account of the cross impressed on it. It is still current in Spain. Each cruzado is worth 3s. English.

keep him company and enliven his solitude, Don Pedro was so much affected by the petition that he could not refrain from paying a tribute of tears to the misfortunes of his brother. The change in the government caused the most lively sensations throughout the kingdom, and spread joy amongst it's inhabitants. The States which had conferred the regency upon Don Pedro, proposed to him that in order to retain the dowry of Maria, which on account of the low state of the nation's finances it was impossible to return, he should espouse the Queen.

The reader is not ignorant of the affection existing between Maria and Don Pedro, and may therefore readily conceive that this proposition was by no means displeasing to them. A courier was immediately dispatched to the Pope's Legate at Paris, Cardinal Vendome, to demand of him the dispensation, which only waited the arrival of this courier to be signed, and which in effect it was on the 16th March, although the sentence of the Chapter of Lisbon, which ought to have preceded it, was not declared till the 24th. The Pope's bull comfirming the dis-

pensation, was not received till the 10th December, but such trifling irregularities did not impede the celebration of the marriage, which took place on the night of 28th March 1668.

Alphonso having been awaked by the sound of cannon and the ringing of bells, announcing this joyful event, demanding of the guards who were placed over his person, whence the noise which he heard proceeded. Being answered that it was occasioned by the rejoicings for his brother's union with the Princess Maria, he exclaimed,

"Unfortunate Don Pedro! I pity thee, thou wilt soon repent having chosen that French woman as your partner."

This unfortunate monarch was carried to the island of Tercera, and brought back to the Castle of Cintra, where he died of an apoplectic fit on the 12th December 1683, leaving after him a memory justly detested by the Portuguese.

The Queen and Don Pedro having now attained the height of their wishes

without fear, gave loose to their affections, and each day seemed to bring with it an increase of tenderness on both sides. The birth of a Princess, with which the Queen presented her royal consort 6th January 1669, if possible augmented their felicity.

This daughter, the only pledge of their love, died in 1690, without having been married. Although Don Pedro possessed a throne to which there was no pretender, and a lovely bride who, as he himself expressed it, was the object of his most tender regard;

he still experienced a few occasional twinges of conscience. The Queen perceiving him to grow unusually thoughtful, said to him one evening, "What is the matter, my dear Pedro? Have I so soon lost your heart?"

"Ah! Madam, look to the misfortune which weighs upon my mind."

"Pedro unhappy! with a woman to whom he so often repeats that in her his happiness is centred."

"Can I with composure reflect that

the hand which she bestowed upon me had previously been given to my unfortunate brother, who now languishes in a prison?"

"Recollect, Don Pedro, that Alphonso never had any right to call me his spouse. Do not, I beseech you, put me to the pain of canvassing over what has past. I am aware that his captivity must afflict your feeling heart, but are his misfortunes attributable to us? Are they not rather owing to the States, who deemed it a just act of se-

verity to imprison him, he being unworthy to bear the title of Sovereign?"

"And am I, Madam, more deserving of that title?"

"He who is really a man," answered Maria, "is deserving of every earthly title of honour. To yourself I put the question, whether Alphonso could ever pretend to any one. Before the altar of God I have solemnly sworn, that as far as regarded me, he never merited the title of man, and I take Heaven to witness. I here repeat that

oath; therefore dispel those afflicting doubts: No, Alphonso never was my husband. Ah! my dear Pedro, calm your groundless scruples; listen to the voice of tenderness and love, which pleads for Maria, whose only crime is that of having loved too much." So saying she hid her face in her handkerchief, and retired to her chamber.

The state of irresolution in which Don Pedro was, did not permit him to follow the Queen. After having sat for some time absorb'd in reflection, he proceeded to his own apartment, where

he found Clara (a girl for whom he had conceived an illicit passion) arranging the furniture.

Two black eyes full of fire and vivacity, a bosom whose tempting rotundity displayed a thousand attractives, a shape of the most perfect order, such were the charms of the lovely *barredora*,* who had captivated the heart of the Monarch. It was in the arms of this buxom nymph that he drank deeply of those pleasures, which his *timid*

* Barredora is a Portuguese word signifying an Abigail.

conscience would not allow him to seek in those of the Queen.

This girl, who knew not that she possessed charms sufficiently powerful to lead her from the sphere which fate appeared to have marked out for her, and to grace the couch of a King, was convinced of this truth before she thought she could be convinced of any thing. In the arms of her lover she found, as in a dream, that pleasure after which the Queen had long sighed in vain.

This amorous affair soon became public, in consequence of Clara's giving birth to a daughter. This child the King caused to be educated with the greatest attention, and when it was marriageable bestowed it's hand, together with a large dowry, upon the Duke of Cadaval.

The Queen having been informed of his Majesty's secret amour, would not at first believe what was told her on this subject: nevertheless her desire to ascertain the truth, impelled her to mention the affair to Father de Villa,

whom at the same time that she spoke of it, she regarded with a steady gaze in order, if possible, to read in his countenance what motives of delicacy and discretion might prevent his tongue from disclosing.

The embarrassment which he evinced only tended to confirm her suspicions. "Just Heaven!" she exclaimed, bursting into an agony of tears, and casting herself into the first seat that that offered, "does *he* then, for the love of whom I sacrificed every thing, prefer a vile servant to me!"

The Priest attempted to retire, but the Queen detained him, asking him in a voice broken by sobs, if it were true that the King had rendered himself culpable towards her by the infidelity of which he was accused. Seeing that he continued silent, answering her only by signs that augmented instead of dissipating her fears, the Queen exclaimed, "I desire that you will, without hesitation, inform me whether Don Pedro is guilty or not?"

"Madam," answered the Jesuit,

with the utmost apathy, " you know that Don Pedro is King."

" True," replied Maria, " but prior to his being so, that in one respect at least he was my husband, and the title of King does not give him the privilege of breaking the vows of fidelity he passed to me, in the presence of the Almighty and his Minister. I might break the alliance formed with Alphonso, because the Church herself, by the voice of her Pontiff, released me from an illusive and chimerical oath. That which the Church could

do in respect to Alphonso, she had no right to exercise in regard to a wife who has given her husband not only a living pledge of her love, but also every testimony of her affection, tending to render his regard for her durable."

The Queen now left Father de Villa, and with the rapidity of lightning flew to the King's apartments. Trembling and unable to speak, she approached Don Pedro, and cast herself at his feet, tears standing in her eyes. "Rise, Madam," said the Prince to her with an air of surprise, "What

can be your motive for acting thus: Deign to inform me of the cause of those tears which you shed."

"The only mode of stopping their course, of drying up for ever their source, is to restore to me your love, which I have lost."

"Is it possible," replied the King, "that you take pleasure in forming such chimeras?"

"The indifference with which you treat me, proves that my fears are but

too well grounded. It is now impossible I can longer doubt that a low domestic has supplanted me in your heart. Yes, my misfortune is evident." As she spoke thus, she dropped nearly fainting upon the floor.

The King having raised her up, placed her upon a sofa, and as soon as she began to recover her senses, said, " I intreat, Madam, that you will not wound my sensibility by such language as you have just used."

" This is the last time I shall ad-

dress you upon the subject," answered the Queen. All my tears and sighs cannot alter the doleful certainty of the evil which overwhelms me. I loved you better than you deserved, but I am punished for my folly. The sentiment upon which I founded my felicity has become the source of my unhappiness. I now see into what an abyss of misery love has cast me, but how great soever my misfortune may be, I cannot hate him whom my heart once so fondly cherished the idea of. The love which I vowed towards you shall be eternal, in spite of the indif-

ference with which you receive the proofs and recal the remembrance of it. Nothing shall induce me to violate the oath I made to love you, and I shall endeavour to find in the duties which the fidelity I owe you impose upon me, consolation sufficient to soften the anguish of which I am at this moment the victim."

In uttering these words she warmly embraced the Prince, and then said, "We have sinned, and must expiate our faults by tears of repentance." She immediately quitted the apart-

ment, leaving Don Pedro to those reflections which the foregoing conversation could not fail giving rise to.

From this time the Queen dedicated her days to meditation and pious exercises. She paid peculiar attention to the education of her daughter the Infanta, for whose use she wrote a small work filled with maxims and rules of life of the most edifying and excellent kind. She died 27th December 1683, addressing to the King, who attended her dying moments, the most christian-like consolations, and

those best adapted to calm the sorrow and penitence with which he seemed to be impressed.

" I die," said she, " with the sweet hope, that we shall meet again in our everlasting abode, purer than we are upon earth; and that we shall love each other with a tender and constant affection. In descending into the tomb I bear with me all the affection which I vowed towards you, and in quitting this mortal coil, my last sigh shall be an additional declaration of my love

and my fidelity." She had scarcely finished this moving speech ere she expired in the arms of Don Pedro.

Secret History of

ELIZABETH Queen of ENGLAND.

The Earl of Essex was more indebted to the favor which he found in the eyes of Queen Elizabeth, than to his intrinsic worth, for his rapid elevation to grandeur and glory. After having commanded her armies in Ireland, he was accused of high treason, and underwent

the punishment justly due to his crime. Although Elizabeth beheld in him a traitor deserving of her utmost hatred, love which she had conceived for his person, triumphed over every other sentiment, and would not allow her to think with indifference upon the fate which the severity of the laws decreed to be that of Essex.

In order to avoid the prying eye of curiosity, and to conceal the torment she endured, and which she found it

impossible to prevent from influencing the cast of her countenance, she determined upon remaining in her chamber, receiving only her trusty confidant, the Countess of Nottingham, who entertained for her a most sincere friendship. It was in the bosom of this friend that she reposed the cause of her anguish, by avowing to her, without any reserve, that which till then she sedulously hid from every body.

"Ah! my friend," said the Queen, uttering a profound sigh, "nobody can form an idea of the excessive grief that has taken possession of my heart, to whose weaknesses I am not, as it is generally supposed, superior. I am a woman, and consequently am susceptible of the emotions of a sentiment which daily offers to my imagination, warmed by tenderness, innumerable pleasing phantoms, from which I cannot defend myself. I perceive that I am weak, although perfectly convin-

ced that by yielding to my inclinations I shall subject myself to future regret and misery. Appearance is against me, but how shall I withstand the pressure of my feelings?

" The Earl of Essex, that traitor, has triumphed over my reason, and my heart. To that perfidious man I have sacrificed the liberty which I so long and so obstinately maintained; in a word, it is for that ungrateful wretch, whom I took pleasure in heaping

wealth and honors upon, that love causes me to feel undescribable emotions.

" That disloyal subject, after having governed Ireland, and commanded my armies; after having received the most flattering proofs of my confidence and esteem, leagues with vile conspirators to take away my life and crown; does not permit me to enjoy the only pleasure that my heart pants after, and has the cruelty to snatch from me my mental peace, and the satisfaction I should

have felt in bestowing upon him the happiness, of which I at one time thought him deserving."

"The traitor!" cried the Countess, with the utmost indignation, "Would he might perish a hundred times over."

"Ah!" replied Elizabeth, mournfully, "his death will lay the foundation of that monument to which I shall shortly afterwards be consigned. Although I abhor the crime by which he

has rendered himself culpable, I find that I cannot renounce the love which I conceived for him; and in granting him a pardon, I shall experience a pleasure that will prove to you the extent and force of the affection with which he inspires me.

" Scarcely were my enemies subjugated," added she sighing, " scarcely was my crown placed stedfastly upon my head, before I found myself environed by the most distinguished En-

glish noblemen. Somerset, Leicester, Arundel, Hertford, aspired to the honor of obtaining my hand, and several foreign Monarchs coveted the same. I found means to reject all their propositions, and to convince them that I never would listen to them.

" The Earl of Leicester was the only one who persisted in suing for my favor, and who nourished the hope of triumphing over my determination; but his constancy affected me not,

nor was it crowned with that success which he flattered himself it would meet with.

" The Earl of Essex having subdued the rebels in Northumberland and Westmorland, I then beheld him a hero covered with glory, and a faithful servant deserving of my love and regard.

" Every body spoke of him to me with esteem, and the glorious deeds

which he had achieved were universally admired. He now appeared to me an extraordinary man, and of such distinguished merit, that his Sovereign need not have blushed at surrendering her heart to him.

"From the first interview that I had with him, my peace was irrecoverably gone, and I plainly perceived the ascendancy over me which his conquest gave him.

" It was in vain that I endeavoured to avoid his presence; his image, which every where pursued me, became daily too dear to my heart, to think of renouncing the pleasurable ideas with which it filled my mind. I brought him nearer to my person, and after giving him the clew to my wishes, made him, notwithstanding his youth, a member of my Privy Council.*

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* In 1592.

" The Earl of Leicester discontented with, and animated by jealousy towards him, whom my heart had pleased to distinguish, swore a mortal hatred to him, the effects whereof I counteracted.

" In vain did the King of Sweden, and the Duke of Anjou, express the most earness desire of possessing my hand; I sacrificed all those illustrious suitors to my beloved Essex. He himself, delighted by the manner in

which I governed my dominions, constantly declared that I was fully capable of managing the affairs of State without a coadjutor.

" This eulogium from his mouth flattered my vanity, and none but Essex could even by such a compliment have given me a moment's pleasure. I would fain have discovered the sentiments that he entertained in regard to me, but I invariably found that he kept within the bounds of profound respect,

and the most cautious circumspection. The proud Philip II. of Spain having provoked my ire,* I sent Essex against him, who defeated my enemies, and returned to London in triumph.

" My heart flew on the wings of love to meet the glorious conqueror, and I imagined I never could offer him a sufficient reward for the numerous exploits he had performed, and the unrivalled bravery displayed by him.

* In 1597.

When the campaign was over, Essex, who had so ably directed it's brilliant success, was loaded with marks of honour and glory, yet it was observeable that at the very time when he received those tokens of distinction, he appeared unusually prone to sadness.

" The desire of ascsrtaining the cause of the change in his temper, induced me no longer to conceal from him the pain I experienced in conse-

quence thereof; but, vainly did I seek by the most pointed attentions to win his candour; with as little success I tried to inspire him with jealousy by speaking warmly in praise of the Earl of Leicester; all these arts produced no effect, nor wrought the slightest change in his conduct.

" It was then that I created him governor of Ireland, and that I besought him, on his taking leave of me in order to fulfil the duties of his new

station, not to refuse me his advice upon the most important affair that concerned me.

"I feel myself much perplexed," said I to him, "in consequence of a project I have formed of giving a King to England. The choice is difficult, but my intention is, not to make it from among foreign Princes. To the Earl of Essex I address myself, in order to learn what man he deems worthy of sharing the crown with me."

" This question appeared to create in him momentary embarrassment, but after a few moments' reflection, he answered, that he knew not of any worthy of being the spouse of the illustrious Elizabeth.

" What!" said I, pressing him with fresh questions, " not know one!

" Ah! my dear Essex, speak with

more frankness. The Earl of Leicester*——"

"If he be the man whom the Queen has chosen, I believe——" replied he.

"Ah!" said I, "say rather that you do not believe it. For God's

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* Elizabeth once observed in public, that if ever she took a fancy to matrimony, she would give her hand to the Earl of Leicester.

Memoirs of Melville, Vol. I. Page 131.

sake, grant me the confidence you owe me, and speak unreservedly to a Sovereign who loves you.

" I paused, and casting upon him a tender regard, which sufficed to explain what my tongue could not give utterance to. The cruel man only answered my declaration by an avowal of his passion for the Countess of Rutland. Ah! my dear Nottingham, what an effect did this answer produce upon my heart; an answer so

directly opposite to the love which I had conceived for this ingrate."

Elizbeth now gave free vent to her tears, and remained for some time without speaking to the Countess, who on her side participated in the grief of her Royal Mistress. After a long and painful pause, Elizabeth thus continued.

" I affected to have so much command over my feelings as to approve

of his choice. Having asked my consent to his marriage I gave it him, and after having expressly forbidden him to mention a syllable of our conversation to the Earl of Leicester, I left the apartment for the purpose of reflecting at my leisure, and yielding in private to the regret resulting from my indiscretion.

" The reasons which I found to excuse Essex, induced me quickly to

return to the apartment in which I expected to find him still.

" Having however heard the voice of a person as if quitting an adjacent room, I recognised it for that of the Earl of Leicester, who felicitated Essex upon his good fortune. It is you rather, my dear Earl, replied Essex, that are supremely happy. So saying he retired, leaving Leicester in the utmost astonishment.

" A short time before," continued Elizabeth, " I had sent an ambassador to the King of Navarre to congratulate him upon his having attained the crown of France, and to offer him succours for supporting his claim to that kingdom. My intention was to confide to the Earl of Essex the command of the troops which I destined for this expedition, but I soon rejected this idea. Nevertheless having more maturely reflected upon the subject I resumed the project, and order-

ing the Earl into my presence, I made known to him my wishes respecting the important mission which I purposed appointing him to. He thanked me with a sigh, for this new mark of my confidence in him, and consented to fly to the aid of my brave and faithful ally.

" The Countess of Rutland retired about this time from Court. Scarcely did Essex land in France, ere the trumpet of Fame published the exploits of

the hero in every quarter. These reports having reached me, I experienced joy, equal to my affection for him.

" I now ordered him to pass into Spain with Howard, and no sooner did he arrive there than he filled that kingdom with the renown of his conquests.

" The fleet in which he embarked with the design of returning to England being dispersed by a tempest, and

accounts having reached me that he had perished in the ocean, I discovered by the agony of mind I experienced, the extent of the love I bore him.

" This news was, however, soon contradicted by an account of his arrival in one of our ports, and it would be impossible for me to express the happiness I felt in once more seeing him at Whitehall; my joy on that occasion can only be compared to that which a lover feels when united to the

object of his affection, at the moment in which he supposed her to have been lost to him for ever.

" Essex appeared before me environed by all the brilliancy of glory, and the image of the Countess of Rutland alone prevented my experiencing rapture in the highest degree.

" By reason of the painful state of uncertainty as to the mode in which I should regulate my hopes, I conver-

sed with him for a considerable time, scarcely knowing what I said.

" The tender looks which he assumed, and his air of gaiety and satisfaction, served not a little to encourage them, and poured into my heart the most cordial balm.

" The Earl having visited his estates, returned to Court with an air of indifference which surpassed all that I had before remarked in him.

" The haughty style which Leicester had the audacity to assume in avowing to me that he was jealous of Essex, extremely offended me, and the serious way in which I received another declaration of the same sort deterred him from troubling me again.

" Such was the state of things when rebellion's flames burst forth in Ireland.

" Essex having come to me and in-

treated that I would permit him to bring back my Irish subjects to their allegiance, I could not refrain from pointing out to him the new dangers to which he was about to expose his life. His reply was—It belongs entirely to my Sovereign.

" Having added that I felt less for my Crown than for his safety, I could no longer help telling him how dear to me he was. Has my Sovereign, said he, conceived towards *me* so ten-

der and on my part so unmerited a sentiment? The Earl of Leicester——

——" Has no claim, I replied, upon a heart which is your's.

" This answer appeared to cause surprise and embarrassment in him, which I interpreted in my favor.

" I immediately took a ring from my finger and presenting it to him, said, it was the most unequivocal proof

I could give him of my attachment, my favor, and my love.

" After so flattering a testimony of my esteem for him, after the most solemn oaths to love him, and only him, as long as I lived, he departed for Ireland loaded with every favor I could confer upon him.

" Scarcely was the traitor arrived in the Sister country, before he commenced a secret correspondence with Ty-

rone, and (will you believe it, my dear Nottingham) formed the horrible design of dethroning me."

The recital of the Queen was ended with a flood of tears. The Countess of Nottingham, who had conceived for Essex as lively a passion as the Queen herself, but which disappointment had changed to mortal hatred, was much perplexed on learning that this Princess still loved him.

This discovery only permitted her to enjoy a partial triumph, in which Cecil the Secretary of State, with whom she leagued against the Earl, participated; but from this time they redoubled their efforts to hasten the ruin of the unfortunate nobleman.

It is difficult to say whether the conduct of the Queen in this respect ought to be taxed with imprudence, or regarded as an act of policy; but certain it is, that the love she enter-

tained for Essex induced her to take the extraordinary step of secretly, and with all imaginable caution visiting the Earl in prison.

" Oh Elizabeth," cried Essex, with as much surprise as pleasure, " what brings you into this asylum of woe?"

" I come hither," replied the Queen, to hear your justification."

" The greatest crime that I can

reproach myself with, is that of having misconceived my happiness."

" And of having betrayed me," returned Elizabeth, " at the moment when I purposed making you a participator of my power. What could be your motive for acting so ?"

" The desire of crushing those of my enemies, who had vowed my destruction. The Queen has been deceived by the reports propagated to

my prejudice. I have been cast into a dismal dungeon; I have been condemned without a hearing. Deprived of the power to clear myself in her eyes from the imputations cast upon my name; I can only now support my innocence by bare assertion. The Queen attaches credit to the depositions of my sworn foes, and I am become the object of her hatred."

"Is it you, Essex, who can speak thus? Ah! rest assured that my zeal

to save you will equal that with which your foes endeavour to work your ruin; but their efforts shall be unavailing." As she pronounced these words she quitted the prison, leaving the unfortunate Essex a portion of consolation, which caused a temporary suspension of the horror with which, till then, his mind had been filled.

Early, the next morning, the Queen ordered Cecil and the Countess of Nottingham into her presence, and

having spoken to both of them for a considerable time, desired that the Privy Council might be assembled, determining that Essex should be acquitted of the charges brought against him; a resolution which she previously confided to the Countess.

The latter was much disconcerted by an arrangement so contrary to her plan of individual vengeance, and used every means to instruct Cecil how he should act.

The Secretary of State finding how matters were situated, inclined to pardon Essex; but an incident soon occurred, which destroyed beyond reparation the clemency that it was intended to extend to him.

The Countess of Rutland was announced, and being introduced by direction of the Queen, she cast herself on her knees before her Majesty, saying, "I come to implore forgiveness for the unfortunate Earl of Essex; I come

to implore your mercy for my unhappy husband, whom I love, whom I adore!"

"What do I hear!" exclaimed the Queen, "Essex your husband! He wedded you without my knowledge. I am sorry for it, Madam, but it is not in my power to decide in this affair. The Peers of the realm are assembled to judge his case; they will pronounce their decision, and the law must take its course."

"Ah!" cried the Countess, drowned in tears, "it is all over—my ill-fated Lord is undone."

"If he is innocent," said Elizabeth, "he has nothing to fear—if guilty, he is deserving of death."

"Most certainly he is innocent," replied the Countess, "but his enemies———"

"You seem to forget, Madam, that

Justice and the Laws are the prime safeguards of my subjects. Why should not the Earl of Essex rely upon them as others do?" Elizabeth now quitted the presence-chamber, and directed her guards to conduct the Countess of Rutland homewards.

"Traitor!" cried she in the height of her rage, "you have three times deceived me. Wretch that he is, he merits contempt, he deserves disgrace and death."

In this disposition she repaired to the council-chamber, and having listened to the examination of the Earl, returned to her chamber, where she shut herself up, directing that no person should intrude upon her privacy.

Cecil and the Countess of Nottingham triumphed. The Earl of Essex was reconducted to the Tower.

Agitated, and surprised that what had just passed so ill accorded with

the promises of the Queen, he at first could only think of the contradictory appearance of things. His doubts did not, however, cause him to lose that fortitude with which he had hitherto supported his misfortunes.

In the mean time the Queen was plunged in the most profound sorrow. After many enquiries on the part of the Countess of Rutland relative to her husband, she learned what had passed in the council-chamber. She

now determined on using every means to gain an interview with the unfortunate prisoner, and at length by dint of bribery effected her purpose.

Nothing could equal the surprise of Essex on beholding the Countess, who, not without anguish of the most heart-rending kind, heard that the method she had used to serve him, was precisely that which tended to hasten his ruin.

" Oh my dear Essex," said she, " it

is still in your power to save yourself, and I hope you will not refuse pursuing the means necessary for that purpose. Elizabeth still loves you—disown our marriage—I will do the same."

—" Is it to the husband who adores you, who has sworn ever to love you, that you propose such a mode of eking out a miserable existence! No, Madam—know Essex better—I have preserved my honour. Can the sacrifice of my life equal the shame wherewith perjury would cover me?"

The guards now entered, and having warned the Countess of the necessity there was for her immediately retiring, she was obliged to obey. This separation did not take place without many tears on both sides.

Notwithstanding the forcible reasoning employed by Essex and his friend Southampton in the course of their examination, they found it impossible to exculpate themselves from the accusations formed against them. They

were both declared guilty of the crime of high treason, and were condemned to lose their heads.

The Earl of Essex heard his sentence with the utmost composure, and instead of praying a mitigation of it, he only intreated pardon for his friend. Elizabeth ordered their execution to be suspended. She could not, in spite of her excessive anger, so promptly decide upon condemning to the block him who had been the object of her

most tender affection. She had been insulted and she panted after vengeance, or, more properly speaking, after a reparation which she could not renounce;* but love counterbalanced her resentment, and her heart was divided between sentiments so opposite in their nature.

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* Pope Alexander, a most zealous admirer of Queen Elizabeth, had no sooner heard of the execution of Mary Queen of Scots decapitated by order of this Princess, than he exclaimed, "Oh! happy woman, who has tasted the pleasure of making a crowned head dance." It was the same Pope who said publicly, that he most earnestly desired to pass a night with Elizabeth, in order to give a second Alexander to the world.

The agitation of the Princess disenabled her for some time from adopting a mode of conduct. Cecil was also at a loss to know how to act, and the Countess of Nottingham dreaded the Queen's irresolution. They both feared that Elizabeth might take compassion upon the Earl, the more so, as she had granted a pardon to Southampton.

The Earl of Essex sensibly felt the effects of her clemency towards his friend, he extolled her generosity, and

even desired to know what she had said upon the subject.

The Countess of Rutland, understanding that her husband was on the point of being executed, flew to the palace, which she made to resound with her cries and plaints, to which the Queen was totally insensible, coldly observing to the Countess of Nottingham, "Let this woman weep, let her complain. She must shed many more tears before she can equal the

sum of those which the same cause that troubles her has made to flow from my eyes."

In a few moments afterwards she exclaimed, "How am I to act, cruelly situated as I am! Is it possible that I could see him perish? I have loved him—I love him still. Shall I expose myself to the reproaches to which my cruelty, in not having saved him when I could do so, will leave me liable? But he will not even sue for a pardon.

Haughty traitor! yes, he has betrayed me, let him perish,"

The Earl of Essex being informed of the time appointed for his execution, became greatly agitated in proportion as the hour advanced. He at length determined upon suing for a pardon, and in consequence of that determination sent for the Countess of Nottingham, who soon appeared at the Tower.

"Madam," said he, as she entered his prison, "the friendship which you have ever testified towards me, emboldens me to hope that you will deign to do me that favor which in my present situation I absolutely stand in need of."

"If what you require be in my power——"

"It is, Madam, it is in your power to render me a service, which I trust

to experience from your generosity. Say, Madam, that you will be a mediatrix between my Sovereign and me. Promise to deliver into her own hands, without delay, this ring, which she will recognise. I implore her clemency in behalf of a wife, a son, and an unfortunate father."

The Countess, overjoyed at finding herself in possession of a ring which had long been a subject of anxiety and trouble to herself and Cecil, assured

the Earl of her readiness to justify the flattering proofs he had given her of his confidence, and left him inwardly determining to keep both his request and the ring equally secret from the Queen.

Elizabeth, finding that Essex made no sort of application, procrastinated as long as possible; but, at length, perceiving that no messenger came, or was likely to come from him, she signed his death warrant.

The fortitude and intrepidity with which the Earl mounted the fatal scaffold, drew tears and audible sobs from every by-stander; he would not suffer his eyes to be covered, but fixing them stedfastly on the sable block, remained for a few moments as if in deep contemplation, and then kneeling down received the blow of the executioner, which terminated his career on the 25th February 1601.

In the interim the Queen, a prey to the most heart-rending anguish, de-

termined to stop the execution of the warrant, and accordingly dispatched an officer for that purpose; but alas! it was two late—Essex was no more.

Elizabeth, upon learning the doleful news, fell into a swoon, and remained for a considerable space of time divested of sense or motion. As soon as she recovered the use of her faculties, she shed a torrent of tears, sobbed violently, and yielded to the force of her grief and rage to such a degree, that she uttered maledictions against Essex's judges.

Her chagrin subsequently to the death of the Earl daily increased, and at last threw her into a state of misanthropy perceptible to every of her attendants. Shut up in her chamber she sighed from morning till night, invoked the name of Essex, and called upon death to terminate her existence, and consign her to the tomb into which she precipitated him.

The Countess of Nottingham did not long enjoy her triumph, attacked by a dangerous malady, and racked by

the agonies of a lingering death, she confessed to the Queen all she had done, and handed Elizabeth the ring which the ill-fated Essex had confided to her care. The Queen, transported with rage, and regardless of the Countess's state of health, exclaimed, "Abominable, perfidious woman—his death is then owing to your perfidy! May Heaven prove more indulgent to you than I am, and pardon that crime, that horrible crime, of which the recollection will never be effaced from my mind." So saying she quitted the chamber of the Countess,

who shortly afterwards expired. Elizabeth fell into a state of melancholy difficult to describe.

The ring which the treacherous Countess had delivered to her, never afterwards quitting her finger for an instant, and the image of the Earl of Essex was present to her memory to the last moment of her life; the residue of which was embittered by the recollections it occasioned.

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